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OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

Letter dated 19 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement dated 13 February 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the results of the Kazakhstan-Russian consultations on questions relating to the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 39.

(Signed) Akamaral ARYSTANBEKOVA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
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ANNEX

Statement dated 13 February 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the results of the Kazakhstan-Russian consultations on questions relating to the legal status of the Caspian Sea

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan has been authorized to state that the Kazakhstan side is satisfied with the results of the Kazakhstan-Russian consultations on questions relating to the legal status of the Caspian Sea, held on 9 and 10 February 1998 in Astrakhan.

In implementation of the joint statement of 24 January 1998 by the Presidents of the two countries on the need to reach consensus on the conditions for a just division of the Caspian Sea seabed, the sides agreed to demilitarize the Kazakhstan-Russian part of the Caspian seabed on the basis of the principle of the points that are equidistant from the opposite shores as well as the principle of agreement by the sides on separate sections, which represents indubitable success at the negotiations held at the level of the deputy heads of the foreign policy departments.

The sides also reached agreement on cooperation in exploiting Kazakhstan's hydrocarbon deposits on the Caspian, using Russian river transport routes, primarily the Volga river and the Volga-Don canal, and more effective cooperation in developing export pipelines.

The sides agreed on the need to maintain common use of the waters of the Caspian for navigation under the flags of the five littoral States, fishing on the basis of setting quotas and issuing licences for fishing activities as well as cooperation in the field of environmental protection. These principles must be an integral part of the convention on the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

The sides are intensifying joint activities for speeding up negotiations by the five sides on the entire range of Caspian issues.

The agreements reached create reliable prerequisites for expanding Kazakhstan-Russian partnership, inter alia, in such important fields as developing the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea and their transport, protecting the Caspian natural environment and conserving and making rational use of its biological resources.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses the hope that the results of the consultations will serve as an impetus for all the Caspian countries to achieve a consensus on the legal status of the Caspian Sea.